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Shah Shuja's 'Hidden History' and its Implications for the Historiography of Afghanistan

Shah Mahmoud Hanifi

Introduction: Locating Shuja in the first Anglo-Afghan war and in the context of the Pashtun domination hypothesis

- ¹ The first Anglo-Afghan war of 1839-1842 sets the stage for this examination of Shah Shuja, and the large volume of literature on the war itself requires attention before we can turn to the Afghan monarch who is most intimately associated with the catastrophic colonial failure in Pashtun dominated Afghanistan. The first Anglo-Afghan war is well documented yet poorly understood. It is well documented from the diplomatic and military perspectives, but questions still remain about what is generally viewed as the most consequential defeat suffered by colonial forces in the history of the British Empire.
- ² Sir John William Kaye (1854) produced the first substantive treatment of the Afghan disaster and he located blame with the Governor General Lord Auckland and his circle of advisors. Subsequent authorities on the subject have in various ways exonerated Auckland (Norris 1967) and focused more attention on Alexander Burnes and the Political Agency System he represents (Yapp 1962, 1963, 1964, 1980: 307-460). Some writers have drawn attention to the failure of the colonial communication networks in their own right and in relation to indigenous forms of information circulation (Bayly 1996: 128-140, Iqbal 1975), others point to Anglo-Sikh relations (Hasrat 1959, 1968), while still others have drawn attention to the failure of supply lines (McMunn 1977: 125). There are multiple first-hand accounts by British Indian soldiers and administrators that provide extensive information about the constitution of military units, routing and transportation issues, and the multiple battles that occurred at various stages of the war (Gould & Chadwick 1880, Greenwood 1844, Gupta 1987, Haughton 1879, Stocqueler 1983). Students also

benefit from considerable literature on the fateful final march of Army of the Indus from the Kabul cantonments through its destruction at Jagdalak and final demise at Gandamak (de Wend 1915, L. Dupree 1976, Macrory 1966). One also finds a good deal of attention to the Company Surgeon Dr. William Brydon who was the sole survivor of that fateful march (Trousdale 1983), and the plight of British captives including Lady Sale in Bamiyan (Sale 2002), as well as the siege of Jalalabad and its defense by General Robert Sale (N. Dupree 1975a, 1975b, Trousdale 1983). We have a large volume of writings about the British Army of Retribution led by Sir George Pollock wherein the contributions of Robert Sale and Sir William Nott (Kekewich 2011, Nott & Stocqueler 1854) are prominent. There is a postal history of the war (Martin 1964) and biographies from a number of participants, including the American Quaker Josiah Harlan (Macintyre 2005).

- 3 In addition to the multiple general historical analyses (Durand 2000, Forbes 1892: 1-157, Hay 1911, Morris 1878), the war was reintroduced in the United Kingdom in 1969 through the historical fiction genre with George Macdonald Fraser's *Flashman* novel that became the first in a popular twelve-volume series (Fraser 2005). Roughly thirty years later in the United States John Waller's (1990) *Beyond the Khyber* also garnered a good deal of notoriety. The first Anglo-Afghan war received heightened attention after 11 September 2011 with a large number of American and British academics, policy makers, journalists, amateur historians, and web-based writers and cartographers generating another rich layer of information about this important conflict (Andovski 2010, Fremont-Barnes 2009, Johnson 2011, Loyn 2009, O'Ballance 2002: 1-28, Tanner 2002: 136-201, Fabis Wiki website).
- 4 Looking at these rich and diverse fields of literature on the first Anglo-Afghan war it is clear the conflict has been revisited by a large number of writers in each country involved in subsequent conflicts. Each cycle of writings appears to largely reproduce and repackage without substantial alteration a master historical narrative superimposed over the abysmal loss of the Army of the Indus that jeopardized the fiscal buoyancy of British East India Company rule in India and triggered events leading to the Great Indian Mutiny in 1857.² The master narrative can be outlined as follows. British geo-political concerns with Russian imperial ambitions led to an ill-advised and poorly executed extension of British military power in the Hindu Kush in the summer of 1839.

FIGURE 1: Shah Shuja's Qandahar Coronation, 1839³



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- 5 The poorly conceived occupation met its almost predictable end due to the treachery of the erstwhile Afghan ally, Akbar Khan, and the unexpected assassinations of its key leaders, William Macnaghten and Alexander Burnes, in November of 1841. In January of

1842 the occupation army, deprived of regular supplies and under the incompetent leadership of William Elphinstone, took the disastrous decision to escape Kabul and was massacred en route to Jalalabad.

FIGURE 2: General William Elphinstone's final resting place, Jalalabad, 1878⁴



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- 6 An Army of Retribution was organized later that year. Beyond its own ample resources the Army of Retribution coordinated the remaining forces under siege in Jalalabad and Qandahar in order to rescue the British captives in Bamiyan and destroy the spectacular Mughal covered bazaar in Kabul as a demonstration of reconstituted colonial authority.

FIGURE 3: Jagdalak, 1842⁵, British Library Online Collection



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FIGURE 4: Jagdalak, 1879⁶



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- 7 A version of that narrative appears in all English language writings, and among the most prominent common denominators within the first Anglo-Afghan war literature is the attention given to the circulating Durrani monarchs Shah Shuja (r. 1803-1809 and 1839-1842) and Dost Muhammad (r. 1826-1839 and 1842-1863).

FIGURE 5: Shah Shuja Durbar, Diwan-e Am, Bala Hissar, Kabul, 1839⁷



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FIGURE 6: Shah Shuja Durbar, Diwan-e Am, Bala Hissar, Kabul, 1839⁸

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FIGURE 7: Diwan-e Am, Bala Hissar, Kabul, 1839⁹

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- 8 Shuja is the Afghan ruler who in 1809 received the first British emissary to the Kabul Kingdom, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and who thirty years later in 1839 was repatriated by the Army of the Indus and then met his fate with it. Dost Muhammad is the Afghan ruler who surrendered to the British at the beginning of the war and returned to power after it was over.¹⁰

FIGURE 8: Dost Mohammad Surrenduring to Macnaghten, 1840¹¹

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FIGURE 9: Dost Mohammed in Peshawar in British Custody, 1841¹²

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- 9 Just as the master narrative of the first Anglo-Afghan war tends to elide its significant long-term economic impact on the Afghan economy, the master narrative of modern Afghanistan as a whole is woven around the theme of Pashtun domination.¹³ Without the space here to survey all of the literature on modern Afghanistan, it would be very difficult to argue the prominent theme of Pashtun domination of Afghanistan does not unify large, diverse, and growing sets of writings on the country. The most fundamental problem with the predicate of Pashtun domination of Afghanistan is that it is not explained beyond reference to tribal genealogies that, in keeping with short order thinking about the country and its people, are not interrogated as either historical texts or frameworks for political action. In this hasty reasoning manner Shah Shuja is accepted as a Pashtun because he is the grandson of the founder of the Afghan state Ahmad Shah who is portrayed as a Pashtun, but again conspicuously *not* demonstrated to be one.¹⁴ *Mutatis mutandis* Dost Mohammad becomes merely a 'rival cousin' who steps back into a stable framework of Pashtun domination of the Afghan state after the Shuja's demise. So the master narrative of Pashtun domination imposes a view of the multiple reigns of Shah Shuja and Dost Mohammad and of the first Anglo-Afghan war more generally as simply a slight shift between from the Popalzai Saddozay tribal lineage to the Barakzai Muhammadzai genealogical branch of Pashtuns who continued to dominate the Afghan state structure until the Revolution of 1978. Even through the transformative convulsions of invasions and war characterizing the last thirty plus years, the master narrative still dictates that Afghanistan be seen as a problem resulting from violent conflict inherent among Pashtun communities who are by nature hostile to other local tribal and ethnic groups congenitally predisposed to reject democracy, development and modernity.
- 10 It is very hard to follow the logic of how Pashtuns, who are allegedly unable to organize themselves at the state level, can use that very 'failed state' in Afghanistan to dominate anything, let alone other Pashtuns who are said, often in the same breath, to be indomitable. For present purposes, without detailing all of the problematic aspects and unsustainable tenets of the Pashtun domination thesis, it must be emphasized that it requires its consumers to fundamentally suspend their consideration of the realities of internal diversity among Pashtun, the many kinds and degrees of exposures Pashtuns have to non-Pashtuns and the outer non-Pashtun world, as well as the powerful influence of the Persian language on Pashtuns and in the Afghan state structure.¹⁵ The purpose of

this article is to explore Shah Shuja's biography with questions about Pashtun domination and the constitutive and sustained colonial impact on Afghanistan in mind.

Elphinstone's mission and Shuja's flight from Peshawar, 1809

- 11 Mountstuart Elphinstone is perhaps best known for his administrative service to the British East India Company (hereafter BEIC) as Governor of the Bombay Presidency (1819-1827) and Resident at Poona (1811-1817). Elphinstone is also very well known for his 'Minute on Education' (1824) and arguably famous for his *History of India: The Hindu and Mohametan Periods* (1841) that became a staple of Victorian Age reading. Less widely known aspects of Elphinstone's life assume the highest significance as foundational elements of Afghanistan Studies and indeed Afghanistan itself. The referent here is Elphinstone's inaugural British diplomatic mission (1808-1810) to the reigning King of Kabul who was then Shah Shuja, and the publication resulting from that delegation titled *An Account of The Kingdom of Caubul* (1992).
- 12 Napoleon's 1798 invasion of Egypt triggered Lord Minto, the Governor General of the BEIC, to dispatch diplomatic envoys to the rulers of Persia, Kabul, and the Punjab that were intended to secure mutual defense treaties in the event of an overland French invasion of India. These were all very extensive and impressive mobile embassies and scientific laboratories. John Malcolm led the mission to Persia, Charles Metcalfe was in charge of the delegation to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Lahore, and Elphinstone led the mission to the Kingdom of Kabul.¹⁶ Elphinstone's mission was composed of at least 13 additional British officers, 4000 (combined) infantry and cavalry troops, 600 camels, 13 elephants and in total as a single column stretched nearly two miles.¹⁷ Elphinstone and his large retinue left Delhi in October or November of 1808 and in February 1809 arrived in Peshawar, a city Shuja considered the winter capital of his Kabul Kingdom. The most harrowing episode on the nearly four-month and 500-mile long journey was the near demise of the mission due to lack of water in the Rajasthan desert. Elphinstone achieved the goal of a BEIC treaty with the ruler of Kabul. He and Shuja signed a treaty the very day the mission departed from Peshawar, 14 April 1809. The treaty was ratified by Lord Minto on 14 June.¹⁸
- 13 Elphinstone's diplomatic and scientific caravan returned to Delhi in September 1809 and was disbanded in June 1810, the interim period being dedicated to preparation of the mission's final report.¹⁹ Portions of the report were published in 1815 in a book form as *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* that was twice reprinted in 1839 and 1842 for military and public reference in the context of the first Anglo-Afghan war. Elphinstone and his delegation were charged with producing an original and encyclopaedic reference work about the Kingdom of Kabul and its dependencies through their own scientific research. In large measure the scientific investigations performed by the British officers including Elphinstone were predicated on harvesting information from local informants, some of whom such as a nephew of Sayyid Muhin Shah were paid a 'handful of money for answering a few questions' while others were commissioned to undertake more elaborate ethnographic inquiries, for example Rs. 50 per month to one Mulla Najib contracted to gather linguistic and other data about the Siah Posh communities in Kafiristan.²⁰ Although it is unclear precisely who and to what extent others beyond Elphinstone

contributed to *An Account* that bears his name, the book is the first substantive British Indian publication dedicated to Afghanistan and it remains arguably the most important English language text about the country.²¹

- 14 Archival records reveal that while in Peshawar meeting with the Kabul King and gathering materials for his report, Elphinstone and other members of his delegation were receiving both local first-hand information about the rapid demise of his host's position as Shah and communications from Shuja's usurper and half-brother Mahmoud.²² While in Peshawar Elphinstone singularly received multiple letters from his superiors conveying intelligence about Shuja's precarious position proffered by advocates of Mahmoud (a half-brother of Shuja who like Shuja and Dost Muhammad had to reign) now lobbying the British in Delhi. These mailings concerned protocol details about how various levels of the BEIC hierarchy and their clients/dependents in the Mughal court planned to formally receive and treat these Afghans who were opposed to Shuja, and what actually occurred during those communications and interactions. The decision whether or not to inform Shuja about the activities of opposition parties to his rule in Delhi with British officials and Mughal intercessors was left to Elphinstone.
- 15 Shuja was in fact displaced as the ruler of Kabul by Mahmoud while Elphinstone was still in Peshawar. Elphinstone and his superiors were fully aware of Shuja's rapid loss of political buoyancy and knew they were signing a treaty with a defunct regime. As noted above, immediately after securing Shuja's signature on the treaty Elphinstone and his delegation began their return to Delhi. Roughly 80 miles from Peshawar at Hassan Abdal, shortly after crossing the Indus, Elphinstone was overtaken by Shuja's *zenana* or harem of at least seven known wives and an unknown number of concubines and dependents who were desperately fleeing Peshawar for Delhi while Shuja himself tried to elude his usurpers and escape Peshawar.²³
- 16 As a known fugitive or refugee with British contacts Shuja still represented an important variable in local and regional political dynamics and as such he became a useful pawn after his displacement from Peshawar and the Kabul throne. For approximately five years after he and Elphinstone signed the treaty and parted company Shuja was on the run. During this time he appears to have been trying to make his way to British India to join his wives but such a reunion would not be immediate. Instead Shuja was symbolically hosted but practically imprisoned by rivals who might later become allies, and visa versa, at least three times including confinements in Attock (c. 1811-1812), Kashmir (c. 1812-1813) and most significantly for us in Lahore by Maharaja Ranjit Singh between roughly 1813 and 1815.²⁴

Activities of Shuja's wife Wafa Begum culminating in the permanent pension for Shuja and his household, 1809-1816

- 17 It is unclear precisely what happened to Shuja's *zenana* after passing Elphinstone on the road from Peshawar in the spring of 1809, but the harem caravan was destined for British India. By late summer or early fall British officials were discussing which account to charge when presenting Wafa Begum with a gift of Rs. 1,000 and how much it would cost for Shuja's favored wife and her followers to live 'comfortably and decently.'²⁵ Wafa Begum did not immediately settle in any single location in British India, instead she

appears to be trying to reconnect with Shuja who as indicated was detained in various locations between his former dominions and British India after exiting Peshawar.

- 18 By late 1812 Wafa Begum was in touch with British officials to solicit their assistance in securing the release of some of her relatives, but apparently not Shuja, from the custody of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.²⁶ This prompted a flurry of colonial communications in anticipation of her arrival in British India. The BEIC concluded that despite the 'inconvenience, embarrassment, distaste, disutility, expense and regret' of an 'unavoidable scenario' her 'rank and calamities' would ultimately dictate 'granting her asylum, dignity and respect.'²⁷ At this time the British were not considering a permanent pension or provisions for Wafa Begum and wanted it made crystal clear to 'her and any other females' that while in British India they can give absolutely no 'aid or protection to any male branches of the family or any of the numerous dependents and followers.'²⁸ It is noteworthy that to convey their intended messages the British used direct written and oral communications with Wafa Begum as well as local newspapers in Lahore (at least) to publicly broadcast their position regarding displaced Kabul royalty.²⁹
- 19 By the summer of 1813 Ranjit Singh had taken possession of Shuja the person and, apparently of more importance to the Maharaja, the famous *Koh-i Nur* diamond Elphinstone saw adorning the former Kabul ruler's elbow bracelet.³⁰ The BEIC believed Shuja would soon be released and that both he and 'his queen' would make their way to British India. The British had been expecting to receive Wafa Begum for years and colonial authorities were prepared to tolerate her presence in their territory, but they were increasingly adamant that all possible steps be taken directly and through intermediaries to 'dissuade, discourage and resist' Shuja's presence that would be 'infinitely more troubling' than his wife's.³¹ The inevitable negotiations with both Shuja and Wafa Begum required 'all the talents and reserves' of the BEIC Resident in Delhi, who was then the aforementioned Charles Metcalfe, with David Ochterlony assuming the post subsequently.
- 20 Ochterlony was positioned in and around Ludhiana and Karnaul that were two likely destinations of asylum-seeking Afghan elites given the precedents of the Afghan monarch Shah Zaman (1770-1844). Zaman reigned in Kabul between 1793 and 1800 when he was deposed and blinded by Mahmoud. Zaman appears to be the first Afghan elite to be granted a British pension in Ludhiana in 1801.³² Elphinstone met him when returning from Peshawar and encountering Shuja's speeding harem at Hassan Abdal in 1809 (see above). Zaman, Mahmoud and Shuja were all half-brothers sharing as their father Timur Shah (r. 1773-1793) who was the son and successor of the Afghan empire's founder, namely, Ahmad Shah (r. 1747-1773).
- 21 Ahmad Shah was born in Multan in 1722 and in the spring of 1815 Wafa Begum was petitioning the British to leverage Ranjit for the release of Shuja so that they two could be reunited there in what might have been viewed as an ancestral homeland among many homelands.³³ Records indicate the primary British concern was how various potentialities of receiving Shuja and his household at any location or communicating with him in any formal capacity would impact the BEIC relationship with the emerging Sikh empire of Ranjit Singh. The mutual defense treaty Charles Metcalfe failed to secure was likely a primary source of this institutional preoccupation. That conjecture notwithstanding, in August 1815 the BEIC rendered it prudent to grant Wafa Begum a pension of Rs. 1,500 per month.³⁴

- 22 What exactly transpired over the next year is unclear, but in September 1816 the British decided to grant Shuja an annual pension of Rs. 50,000.³⁵ This figure was inclusive of all previous arrangements with his dependents including Wafa Begum and remained valid while he and his household remained under British jurisdiction. When Lieutenant Murray was sent to convey the terms of this pension to Shuja in October he reported that the ex-King of Kabul 'who spoke good but soft and low Persian...considered himself at home' with those arrangements.³⁶ Murray provided details about the precise statements, spatial movements, physical gestures, and material exchanges comprising this encounter. In Murray's descriptions the heavily influential role of Shuja's Persian-speaking 'confidante and preceptor' Mullah Shakur Ishakzai is most noticeable. As the *wazir-e azam* or chief minister and the usual go-between for Shuja in written and oral communications with his British patrons, his wife Wafa Begum, his onetime captor and would-be ally Ranjit Singh, Hindu bankers from Shikarpur, and the Sind Amirs, Mullah Shakur was clearly the most influential member of Shuja's small inner circle of confidantes.
- 23 Between November 1816 and July 1817 Murray and Mullah Shakur communicated and interacted extensively.³⁷ Murray was stationed in Ludhiana and his duties appear to revolve exclusively around the pensioned ex-king. The day after his first introduction Murray received written requests from Mullah Shakur regarding Shuja's desired appropriation of one of three residences already occupied by British officers in the vicinity of Wafa Begum's recently acquired domicile. Communication ensued about those three and additional possible residences for Shuja alone, alternative homes for both Shuja and Wafa Begum, and about the technical prospects and estimated costs of potentially closing public roads to make private passages between separate residences. From records examined in Lahore it is unclear precisely where Shuja and Wafa were finally situated, or if one or both of them ever changed or shared residences while in Ludhiana. What is clear is that privacy was a primary concern of Shuja's, and Mullah Shakur repeatedly complained to Murray about that value being compromised by passersby mounted on elephants.³⁸
- 24 The concentration of records for the approximate eight-month period after Shuja was granted his pension reveal features of communicative practice on each side of this asymmetrical relationship. From the British Indian vantage point it was essential to disassociate themselves from their client's expressed aspirations to recover the Kabul throne.³⁹ But of course this particular position with reference to Shuja was destabilized by the British pension that entailed a number of widely publicly known components of their material support beyond the mere physical location of complimentary and complementary residences. To help sooth the tension between the theory and practice of their policy toward Shuja, Murray was instructed to disseminate official positions and refutations of 'bazaar rumor' via local news writers, their publications and the conversations those texts produced.
- 25 Some of the challenges the British had with reference to Shuja came from the ousted dynast's own camp which tried to generate a robust public rendition of colonial patronage via its own networks of local communication that were never fully captured by British. In this information battle Mullah Shakur was repeatedly chastised by Murray for a number of communicative missteps and oversteps. One of the issues of contention was the circulation of alleged forgeries of correspondence between Shuja's *zenana* and the British that jeopardized the pension itself.⁴⁰ This episode reveals targeted messaging and disinformation campaigns waged between Shuja and the British were triangulated

through the relatively independent agencies of Wafa Begum personally and the *zenana* generally.

- 26 Armed horsemen comprise the final principal subject area addressed in the cache of archival documents generated in the months following the implementation of Shuja's pension. The British characterized the approximate 4,000 horsemen in Shuja's entourage as 'unfortunate, presumptuous, and rapacious' and note it was legal for them to be carrying away Shuja's property in lieu of pay while migrating to an alternative center of Afghan political gravity in Karnaul.⁴¹ To replace this growing deficit among his retainer corps Shuja tried with little success to hire the 'Hindustani' horsemen he was fond of hunting with in daylight hours for night-time watch duty.⁴² The hiring of non-Afghan Hindustani military labor was contentious because of Shuja's declared intention to recapture what he termed *wilayat* with the support of the *wilayatis* who still remained loyal to him.⁴³ The point of friction was that Shuja had only the pension as income and the pension itself could not be used for purposes at odds with official British policy that in this case was not to support his desire to recapture Kabul. The issues relating to Shuja's armed retainers were amplified by discrepancies in the amounts and modes of payment of the pension. These quandaries were particularly acute during the early transition months after Shuja was deemed to receive Rs. 50,000 annually which as noted subsumed Wafa Begum's previously granted Rs. 1,500 monthly pension.⁴⁴
- 27 The cumulative impact these issues entailed for his emerging relationship with the British apparently depressed Shuja to the extent that he expressed a desire to visit the *ziarat* or shrine of his spiritual ancestor, the Naqshbandi Sufi Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (c. 1564-1624), known as the *mujaddid-i alf-i thani* or the Renewer of the Second Millennium.⁴⁵ Murray discouraged this request for spiritual relief that in symbolic terms at least would have made the pension appear more like a prison to Shuja.

Shuja's failed attempt to recapture Kabul, household defections and education, 1832-1836

- 28 The second bundle of archival material for Shuja is from the 1830s and contextualized by the BEIC desire to 'open up the Indus River for commercial navigation [...] just as Alexander had planned two millennia ago.'⁴⁶ The colonial plan for the Indus culminated in the Army of the Indus that ultimately evaporated on retreat from Kabul in January 1842. The Indus Navigation Project represented and underwrote the Army of the Indus.⁴⁷ The Indus Navigation Project was informed by a scientific understanding of dyadic fiscal, physical and temporal relations between the markets of Kabul in the Hindu Kush and the hypothesized but never realized port market of Mithenkote that was to be situated near the conflux of the five rivers of the Punjab. The Indus Navigation Project was predicated on an over-confidence in the prospects of modern technology to surmount nature by dredging the Indus and eliminating its floods, thus allowing for the construction of an inland port at Mithenkote that could be serviced by specially configured flat-bottomed steamships from Europe on the one hand and Afghan nomadic traders and their camels routed from Kabul on the other.⁴⁸ To be realized the Indus Navigation Project required the cooperation of Ranjit Singh and a compliant ruler in Kabul, thus the collusion between Ranjit, Shuja and the British in the Tripartite Treaty of 1839 sanctioning the formation and actions of the ill-fated Indus Army that is the normative historiographic focus of the first Anglo-Afghan war.⁴⁹ What is of interest here is Shuja's earlier similarly

unsuccessful attempt to re-capture Kabul made between 1832-34 without overt public political endorsement or military support from the BEIC.⁵⁰

- 29 Even before his British pension began in 1816 Shuja wrote multiple letters to Elphinstone to seek assistance in reclaiming Kabul.⁵¹ Toward that end during the 1820s Shuja continued writing to lobby his cause with Elphinstone and increasingly influential colonial officials, ever more residual Mughal elites, and his former captor Ranjit Singh. By the early 1830s the BEIC had begun to survey the Indus and to calibrate the colonial commercial and political agenda around Kabul in opposition to Russian imperial expansion in Central Asia. It is important to note the chronological overlap between the Indus Navigation Project and colonial fantasizing about Mithkenkote on the one hand and Shuja's first failed attempt to re-conquer Kabul on the other. After considerable effort Shuja was able to gain a four-month advance on his monthly pension from the BEIC and in early 1832 he set out from Ludhiana for Kabul via the southern Shikarpur-Qandahar route.⁵² Most of the northerly trajectory from Ludhiana to Kabul via the Punjab and Peshawar was under the control of Ranjit Singh. Shuja and Ranjit had reached a 'pincer movement' agreement against the reigning Amir of Kabul, Dost Mohammad, with Shuja to reclaim his old throne in Kabul and Ranjit to take Peshawar. The BEIC sanctioned this plan, however informally or surreptitiously, through at least the lack of opposition to it.⁵³
- 30 Shuja's expedition expected but ultimately failed to generate momentum in fiscal and physical terms as it moved from Ludhiana toward Kabul.⁵⁴ The keys to being able to pay for the mobile and growing army necessary to capture Kabul were to secure the financial hub of Shikarpur and the support of Shikarpuri financiers, in either chronological order. Shuja encountered financial difficulties soon after leaving Ludhiana. To pay for his troops and their various support personnel including craftsmen and merchants before reaching Shikarpur Shuja had to mortgage some of his property and borrow against his British pension from Indian bankers that accompanied his army.⁵⁵ Despite these financial challenges Shuja managed to retain his European advisors and at this still formative stage in early 1833 his army and intentions were consequential enough to generate correspondence with Dost Mohammad and his brothers who served as vice regents in Peshawar and Qandahar.⁵⁶ Shikarpur had been vacated and his troops occupied a financial center emptied of treasure, but by seizing the city Shuja appears to have increased his threat level in the eyes of Dost Mohammad who wrote to him in May in somewhat conciliatory terms offering a son as a hostage and a reinstatement of some of Shuja's former titles and privileges if the expedition were terminated.⁵⁷
- 31 This letter had no effect on his plans and Shuja's army left Shikarpur for Qandahar via Sind in early 1834. During this movement Shuja resolved tension with the Sind Amirs resulting from his extortion of an untold amount of rupees from the financiers of Shikarpur who eventually repopulated the city. Shuja captured Qandahar in March 1834.⁵⁸ The occupation of Qandahar was quite brief, despite a large body of Dost Mohammad's forces dispatched to relieve Shuja's siege of the Qandahar citadel having been redirected toward Peshawar after that city was taken by the forces of Ranjit Singh. The increasing number of defections among Shuja's forces during the siege of the citadel led to the disbandment of his consistently fiscally tenuous expedition. With his plans rapidly unraveling Shuja feigned an escape to Herat only to make a return to his safe haven in Ludhiana through the still relatively friendly terrain controlled by the Amirs of Sind.
- 32 During this return flight to British India Shuja communicated with the Sind Amirs about monetary losses he suffered from the approximately 500 Sindi horsemen who offered

their services to him but were rejected and then absconded leaving a Rs. 500 debt to the bankers in his camp.⁵⁹ The still ex-King of Kabul appears to have ended his reconquest expedition in the summer of 1834 with the mortgaging of personal property that mirrors how the unsuccessful foray began nearly two and a half years earlier. The mortgaging incident that occurred on return to Ludhiana involved the disappearance of the finance minister Shuja employed on this expedition, the Shikarpuri Hindu Lala Jeth Mal, who was said to be in unwarranted possession of property valued at Rs. 50,000 being held as loan collateral.⁶⁰ Correspondence with the Sind Amirs and BEIC officials including Elphinstone directly, indirectly through Mulla Shakur, and via letters delivered by runners led to the return of the goods in question that included an illuminated Quran, a jeweled battle axe and a telescope. In these communications that lasted until at least the summer of 1835 Shuja and Mulla Shakur tried to emphasize the expedition was not defeated by its opposition, but rather failed merely for want of money.⁶¹ In terms of cost it was noted that sieges such as that in Qandahar are particularly expensive and that Shuja's army required one lakh or Rs. 1,00,000 per month to be properly maintained.

- 33 Shuja's defeat had a number of important and arguably predictable ramifications on his household affairs in Ludhiana. These include apparent defections of important members of his family, most notably his eldest son Timur on more than one occasion. In December 1835 Timur entered British records for being abandoned by his servants on one of his escapes, and then managing to borrow money that he could not repay against his father's pension.⁶²
- 34 Archival reference to schools and education during the 1830s are most consequential for us because they speak to planning for a prolonged stay of Afghan elite pensioners and their dependents in Ludhiana and elsewhere in British India. Both pensioned former Shah's of Kabul, namely Zaman and Shuja, established schools for their dependents. Zaman established a school with a combined Arabic and Persian curriculum and Shuja a school that operated only on the Persian model. In approximately July 1836 the pensioners began to petition the British for more funds to purchase books or for *gratis* texts for these schools. It is unclear from the materials consulted precisely when schools sprung up within the Afghan community in Ludhiana, but by the summer of 1836 there were approximately 3000 school age males enrolled in Zaman's and Shuja's schools.⁶³
- 35 Schools run by Afghans in Ludhiana must be seen in relation to the schools run by the British in that city and elsewhere. The school organized under the direction of the influential political agent in Ludhiana, Claude Wade, had in 1834 attracted the attention of a key local intelligence provider and logistical ally in Kabul for the British, Nawab Jabar Khan who was an elder half-brother of Dost Mohammad. Nawab Jabar Khan had to arrange for the secret escape of his son Abd al-Ghias Khan out of Kabul to attend Wade's school in Ludhiana. Once there, Abd al-Ghias received a monthly British scholarship/pension of Rs. 100 per month. This was apparently insufficient and just like Shuja's son Timur so too did Abd al-Ghias run away and accrue large debts on the open market.⁶⁴ For colonial officials these actions only served to complicate the presence of their Afghan clients in British India.
- 36 Full attention to competing schools and the politics of education more broadly among Afghan refugees, exiles and pensioners in British India is beyond the scope this paper. The subject of education nevertheless is a reminder that we are discussing a community of Afghans composed primarily of exiled and pensioned former elites that numbered in the multiple thousands in Ludhiana in the 1830s. The historical trend for Afghans to seek

education in India continued, and today Afghans are the largest population of foreign students in India, with Hamid Karzai's Master's Degree from Simla University in 1983 being a notable example of that long-standing pattern of Afghan intellectual migration to the subcontinent. Beyond intellectual migration, Shah Shuja's inter-regnal years as a pensioner in Ludhiana draw attention to other forms of movement and circulation between Afghanistan and India including military and commercial migrations, as well as spiritual pilgrimages.

Conclusion: unlearning and relearning Afghanistan through Shah Shuja

- 37 The variety and constancy of migrations between Afghanistan and India is an important historical theme evinced by Shah Shuja's biography. The patterns of migration between Afghanistan and India vary by theme (*e.g.*, secular or religious learning, commerce, politics), through multiple historical areas (*e.g.*, pre-Islamic, early Islamic, Mughal, colonial) and across different cultural and spatial geographies and circuitries (*e.g.*, Bamian-Gandhara, Ghazni-Lahore, Kabul-Delhi, Qandahar-Karachi). During Shuja's lifespan the lucrative provinces of Sind, the Punjab and Kashmir fell away from Kabul's sway and rival centers of political gravity such as Herat, Peshawar and Qandahar exerted independence from the emerging tenuously singular state capital of Kabul. Shuja's biography represents the last gasp of mobile kingship and thus the end of the Afghan empire and, simultaneously, the determining influence of colonialism on the historical profile of the increasingly Kabul-centered Afghan state. While Shuja therefore helps us see that colonialism transformed patterns of migration between Afghanistan and India in general terms, his case highlight a conspicuous larger pattern of circular migration among political elites that will be considered below. First, however, we need to consider how the master narratives of the first Anglo-Afghan war and Afghanistan more generally fail to help us understand Shah Shuja's biography.
- 38 As indicated in the introduction to this essay, the master narrative of the first Anglo-Afghan war follows a military timeline that de-emphasizes the less dramatic economic, intellectual and cultural exchanges that occur beneath and around the chronologies of coercion that are supplied in overabundance to new generations of would-be-conquerors of Afghanistan and students of failed colonial conquests. The master historical narrative of Afghanistan that took shape during the colonial era has been transferred into Afghan nationalist historiography. From the perspective of stakeholders in that totalizing vision of Afghanistan, this distillation of archival records about Shuja's pension in Ludhiana might be seen as 'airing dirty laundry' about the exceptional experiences of a unique ruler whose aberrant over-dependency on the British ultimately cost him his life. After all, those addicted and confined to the master narrative would say, the bloody end of Shuja's second tenure represents the 'real history' of eternally xenophobic Pashtun tribal resistance to imperial aggression of one sort or another that has been occurring for millennia.
- 39 What is strikingly ironic about the rich colonial archival database on Shuja that one would expect to support the master narrative of Pashtun dominance of Afghanistan is that it does the opposite. There are a number of criteria available for evaluating Pashtun identity, speaking Pashto (*Pashto wayal*) and the behavioral exhibition of core values (

Pashtunwali) in 'doing Pashto' (*Pashto kawal*) being at once ordinary and primary features of Pashtun identity. Nowhere in the hundreds of files on Shuja, scores of which are cited here, is there any reference to the peripatetic king speaking Pashto or practicing *Pashtunwali*. A researcher can look in vain for evidence of Pashtun identity or Pashtun tribal connections in the thousands of pages providing extremely minute detail on, for example, patterns of speech and domestic arrangements. In terms of verbal conduct, it is clear that Shuja was a monoglot Persian speaker and did not know Pashto or display any need or desire to engage the Pashto language, or any other language for that matter. In terms of the exhibition of the core values of *Pashtunwali*, far from practicing *badal* or anything resembling blood revenge, for example against his captor Ranjit Singh who carted him around in a cage and dispossessed him of the famous *Koh-e Nur* diamond, Shuja appears interested in forgetting the past, and making an alliance with Ranjit Singh to continue with that example of a lack of vengeance for being publicly dishonored. Instead of practicing *pardah* or female seclusion, Shuja put his wife Wafa Begum metaphorically and literally ahead of himself in relation to the wider public that was not limited to just British colonial officials. Another primary contradiction between the master narrative of Pashtun domination and Shuja's lived experience was that he was unable to offer *melmastia* or hospitality of his own, and instead had to accept *nanawati* or asylum from the British! Perhaps the most basic problem is that Pashto and Pashtuns are grounded in rural zone, while Shuja's predilection was for the urban life.

- 40 The imposition of what Edward Said (1994) helps us identify as a highly Orientalized pre-packaged master narrative about Pashtun identity and Pashtun domination do not help us understand Shah Shuja and his place in Afghan history, rather, those faulty templates distort the historical realities of his cultural profile and the cultural complexity of the country-at-large. Following Said's general cultural critique while offering a specific conceptual remedy to the prevailing Orientalist mystification of Pashtuns and Afghanistan, I suggest an inversion of the ordinary analytics that impose a Pashtunization agenda on Shuja and the Afghan state elites he represents. As an alternative to existing models of tribalism, ethnicity and/or nationalism among Pashtuns, the concept of migration provides a much more appropriate mechanism for drawing larger meanings from the ample concrete data we have about Shuja's biography. The argument for a revisionist approach to Shah Shuja specifically and Afghan historiography more generally is essentially advocating a data-first methodological approach to the subject matter. Once intellectually liberated from the politically addictive qualities of a hyper-ethnicized and militarized master narrative, Shuja does not appear as the exceptional dynast whose dependencies were clearly out of line with the normative but awkward understanding of perpetual Pashtun rule in Kabul. Instead, Shuja's external dependency becomes the most characteristic feature of the Afghan political system. Shuja's and other Afghan elites' resource dependency sustained a pattern of circular migration that requires brief attention.
- 41 A cursory review of Afghanistan's history beginning with its founder Ahmad Shah through to the present Hamid Karzai will indicate that a high level of dependency on external resources is a primary characteristic of Afghan political elites and the regimes they form. The basic pattern is as follows: rulers take local power in relation to external resources; this prompts the voluntary or forced migration of local political opponents; many of those opponents receive refuge and asylum from the (same) external powers that routinely provide resources to exiles and refugees; the collusion of interests between

powerful 'host' external actors wanting to advance their peripheral interests and the deracinated dependent ex-elite 'guests' hopeful of regaining their former status in Kabul with external support is realized; the cyclical pattern is repeated.

- 42 This migration-based model of Afghan history is predicated on *circulation* and the continual relationship between internal and external processes that form the Afghan political system. The circular migration model does not fit every Afghan ruler and each historical era perfectly, but it carries the weight of much evidence. The model is particularly useful for helping to explain how Afghan elites such as Shuja and his household were exposed to colonial frameworks of understanding and acting on Afghanistan while in 'diaspora,' during which time they received education, training and incentives to transfer colonial practices and frames of reference 'back' to Afghanistan when 'repatriated.' The Afghan national reproduction of colonial ideologies through the conduit of circulating political elites requires separate treatment, here Shuja only illuminates the historical pattern to be explored elsewhere.
- 43 Far from understanding Afghanistan, particularly the origin and organization of the Afghan state, through atavistic Pashtunness that cannot be extinguished, the history of Shuja's near quarter century in Ludhiana force us to reckon with the non-Pashtun, particularly the Persianate features of the Afghan polity, and the wide range of external influences including especially colonialism's economic effect on Afghan society and its intellectual and ideological impact on Afghan elites. What I have called Shuja's 'hidden history' highlights how much there is yet to learn, and what must be unlearned and relearned about Afghanistan. It is time to unlearn historically static Pashtun ethnic domination as the key to understanding Afghanistan. It is time to think much more seriously about a number of other issues, including the multiple historically conditioned migration patterns and the permeability of Afghan cultural identities generated by those movements and interactions. So, then, despite his lack of Pashtun credentials and his intimate colonial connections, Shah Shuja can be embraced for at least helping us toward new and improved ways of knowing Afghanistan based upon historical and cultural realities, no matter how uncomfortable these facts are to reckon with for those who remain invested in a crumbling master narrative.

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NOTES

2. See Bilgrami 1972: 109-10 for the war resulting in Indian bankruptcy as well as fueling the Great Mutiny, and Engels for more on the war's ruinous effect on British Indian finances.

3. **Figure 1:** The city of Kandahar. This is plate 14 from 'Sketches in Afghaunistan' by James Atkinson. This view was taken from the camp of the Fourth Brigade, about a mile and a half south of Kandahar. Atkinson described the fortified city: '[It] is situated on the north side of an extensive plain, about two miles from the lofty mountain called Baba-Wulee, and is surrounded by a mud wall, about thirty feet high, with numerous bastions; the length of the city is about 5000 feet, and 4000 in breadth, with a small stream running across the interior from north to south.' The second city of Afghanistan and its southern capital, Kandahar was ruled by a brother of the Emir Dost Mohammed. He fled north to Mohammed's stronghold of Kabul when the Army of the Indus approached in 1839. The chieftains in the city were bribed with gold. The British then organised a triumphant entry into Kandahar for Shah Shuja, to whom they bestowed an 'official coronation' as Emir of Afghanistan, even though the crowd of Kandaharis was minuscule and unenthusiastic.

4. **Figure 2:** Jellalabad, the bastion where General Elphinstone and other were buried during the seige [sic] 1841-42. Photograph of the fort at Jalalabad, taken in Afghanistan by John Burke in 1878. Burke, an intrepid photographer widely travelled in the Indian sub-continent, is best known for his photography during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-80). He entered Afghanistan in 1878 with the Peshawar Valley Field Force and during the two-year campaign worked steadily in the hostile environment of Afghanistan and the North West Frontier Province (now Pakistan), the scene of the military operations. Burke's photographs include many of the people of Afghanistan and his Afghan expedition produced an important visual document of the region where strategies of the Great Game were played out. The Anglo-Russian rivalry (called the Great Game) precipitated the second Afghan War. Afghanistan was of strategic importance to the British in the defence of their Indian Empire, and the prevention of the spreading influence of Russia. They favoured a forward policy of extending India's frontiers to the Hindu Kush and gaining control over Afghanistan. An opportunity presented itself when the Amir Sher Ali turned away a British mission while a Russian mission was visiting his court at Kabul. The British had demanded a permanent mission at Kabul which Sher Ali, trying to keep a balance between the Russians and British, would not permit. British suspicions of the Amir's perceived susceptibility to the Russians led them to invade Afghanistan. Jalalabad, the traditional winter capital of Afghan rulers, was the first major city of Afghanistan encountered after traversing the Khyber Pass. Situated in a fertile valley watered by the Kabul and Kunar rivers 90 miles east of Kabul, it had once been an important town of the Gandhara period (1st to 5th centuries AD), but the modern city was built by the Mughals. Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire, first planted gardens here, and his grandson Jalaluddin Akbar built the city named after him in the 1560s. It stands in a strategic position on the trade route to the Indian sub-continent. After taking the Khyber Pass, the British troops' occupation of Jalalabad was largely uneventful, and although minor skirmishes with local chiefs took place around it they moved about the city freely. Burke took a number of photographs of the city and its surroundings which are believed to be among the first taken of it; there are no other surviving images from this period. The British spent a considerable amount of time here waiting for the Amir Yakub Khan in Kabul to accept their terms and conditions. The title of this photograph refers to the last resting place of General William Elphinstone, a commander in the first Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42). Old and ill, he had led the terrible retreat towards Jalalabad when many soldiers and civilians had been killed by

Afghan fighters hiding in the hills. He finally surrendered as a hostage in exchange for safe passage for civilians and died of dysentery in captivity.

5. Figure 3: Jugdelluk, the last stand made by General Elphinstone's army in the calamitous retreat. This lithograph was taken from plate 21 of 'Afghaunistan' by Lieutenant James Rattray. The British army suffered its worst disaster while retreating from Kabul in January 1842. On 6 January, the British force of 4,500 soldiers and about 12,000 followers under Major-General Elphinstone pulled out of Kabul and left for Jallalabad. They had been guaranteed safe passage by 18 tribal leaders, but fell prey to the extreme cold, lack of food and supplies and attacks from higher ground by local tribesmen. The column suffered terrible losses and upon reaching Gandamak near the Jagdalak Pass the survivors made a last stand, only to be massacred in a final ambush on 12 January. A single European survivor, Dr William Brydon, managed to reach Jalalabad the following day. Rattray himself rode through the pass in October 1842, as part of Nott's rear-guard. The pass rises in steep ascent; between its walls of blackened granite remnants of barricades still stood, interlaced with bones. Piles of mummified bodies and whitening bones were everywhere. Rattray, depressed that none had the time to perform a decent burial, wrote: 'we were led on by our skeleton guides from mountain to deep ravine, over valley and rugged cliff, skeletons for landmarks, for direction posts, skeletons.'

6. Figure 4: Jugdulluck Camp. Photograph with a distant view of a British army camp at Jagdalak taken from the neighbouring hills by John Burke, 1879-80. The narrow Jagdalak Pass, situated between Kabul and Jalalabad in Afghanistan, cuts through the forbidding Hindu Kush mountain range and was the scene of bitter conflict during the first (1839-42) and second (1878-80) Afghan Wars. It resonates in British military history particularly because many British soldiers were killed here during the First Afghan War. The photograph is part of a series of images forming the Afghan War albums which provided a visual document of the country and resulted in Burke achieving renown as the first significant photographer of Afghanistan and its people. The British became involved in Afghanistan, trying to create a buffer state and protect their Indian empire in the face of Russian expansion in Central Asia. The Anglo-Russian territorial rivalry created what came to be known as the Great Game between the powers. In 1878 Burke accompanied British forces into Afghanistan, despite being rejected for the role of official photographer. He financed his trip by advance sales of his photographs 'illustrating the advance from Attock to Jellalabad'. In his two-year expedition in Afghanistan during the Second Afghan War, Burke became the photographer of the region where the strategies of the Great Game were played out. In a latter phase of the war, from October 1879 to the summer of 1880, British troops (the Kabul Field Force) under General Roberts occupied Kabul. Burke stayed here for many months, photographing the city and its inhabitants and the surrounding territory. It is obvious from his varied images that he had a close relationship with the British troops and did not hesitate to be part of the frontline of action.

7. Figure 5: Interior of the palace of Shauh Shujah Ool Moolk, Late King of Cabul. This lithograph is taken from plate 3 of 'Afghaunistan' by Lieutenant James Rattray. This scene shows Shah Shuja in 1839 after his enthronement as Emir of Afghanistan in the Bala Hissar (fort) of Kabul. Rattray wrote: 'The Shah was a man of great personal beauty, and so well got up, that none could have guessed his age.' He continued: 'the wild grandeur of the whole pageantry baffles description.' The population watched Shuja's grand entry in absolute silence. He was then seated on a white and reputedly ancient marble throne. From here he could be seen by the court in the quadrangle below. The wooden arches and pillars surrounding him were carved and painted and the ceiling richly decorated. A year later the sanctity of the scene was bloodily violated: Shah Shuja was murdered and 'the sacred throne, [became] a lounge, a pitch-and-toss table.'

8. Figure 6: Shah Shuja holding a durbar at Kabul (Afghanistan). Water-colour sketch of Shah Shuja holding a durbar at Kabul, Afghanistan by Jams Atkinson (1780-1852) between 1839 and 1840. This is plate 22 from the album 'Sketches in Afghaunistan'. Inscribed on the mount is: 'A

Durbar held by Shah Shooja at Caubul.' During the 19th century the British were sporadically engaged in conflicts with Afghan leaders due to British fear of Russian encroachment on their Indian colony and internal divisions within Afghanistan. Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk was the Amir of Afghanistan from 1802 until 1809 when he was driven out by Mahmud Shah. The Governor-General of India Lord Auckland attempted to restore Shah Shuja in 1839 against the wishes of the Afghan people. This policy led to the disastrous first Anglo-Afghan War (1839-42). After the retreat of British troops from Kabul Shah Shuja shut himself up in his fortress, the Bala Hissar. He left this refuge and was killed by adherents of Dost Muhammad and his son Akbar Khan on 5th April 1842.

9. Figure 7: The Dewan-e Am looking towards Upper Bala Hissar [Kabul]. Photograph showing the Diwan-i-Am or audience hall of the Amir at Kabul, Afghanistan, with the fortress of Bala Hissar in the background, taken in 1879 by John Burke. It is part of a series of pictures of Afghanistan taken by Burke during the Second Afghan War (1878-80), which form an important visual document of the country as it was during the time of the Great Game or Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region. In 1878 Burke accompanied the British forces into Afghanistan, despite being rejected for the role of official photographer. He financed his trip by advance sales of his photographs 'illustrating the advance from Attock to Jellalabad'. British forces re-occupied Kabul in October 1879 in a fresh phase of the war, as a consequence of the killing of the British Resident Sir Louis Cavagnari and his mission in September 1879. General Roberts who led them aimed to secure his force at Kabul and establish a line of communication with the rest of the British forces via the Khyber Pass. The cantonment here offered a secure and easily defensible position close to the city; it was large enough to accommodate the troops and provided easy access eastwards through the Khyber Pass towards Peshawar, northwards towards Kohistan and westwards into the Chardeh plain. The ancient citadel of Bala Hissar or High Fortress dated from the 5th century AD and encapsulated Afghan history, with successive invasions and rulers adding to and rebuilding different parts of it. It was the seat of power and much of Kabul city lay within it and its rulers sheltered within its thick walls. When the British under General Roberts occupied Kabul in 1879 they stayed here too. When leaving, they partially destroyed it as a lesson to the Afghans.

10. See Noelle 1997 and Lal 1978 for Dost Mohammad and his two reigns.

11. Figure 8: Surrender of Dost Mohammed Khan, to Sir William Hay Macnaghten Bart, at the Entrance into Caubul from Killa-Kazee. This is plate 18 from 'Sketches in Afghaunistan' by James Atkinson. The fear of growing Russian influence around India brought the British to the buffer state of Afghanistan. In 1840 they ousted the Emir, Dost Mohammed, from Kabul and replaced him with the pro-British Shah Shuja. This view shows the road leading from the camp to Kabul in the valley of Qila-Qazi. It was here that Dost Mohammed suddenly gave himself up in November 1840. Atkinson wrote: 'The road from Killa-Kazee is very confined, hemmed in by huge masses of rock on the left hand and dense groves of mulberry trees on the right.' On Mohammed's surrender: 'This event occurred while the British Envoy was taking his accustomed ride, attended by his staff, and totally unconscious of any intention on the part of the Dost, to surrender himself'. McNaghten was political secretary to George Eden, Lord Auckland, Governor General of British India. He was convinced of the correctness of British fears over Russian intentions, and the necessity of placing Afghanistan under British tutelage.

12. Figure 9: Dost Mahommed, King of Caubul, and his youngest son. This lithograph is taken from plate 2 of 'Afghaunistan' by Lieutenant James Rattray. Rattray was in the Bengal Army and took part in the first Afghan War, from 1839 to 1842. This conflict saw Dost Mohammed deposed as Emir of Afghanistan. Rattray was granted an audience with the Emir in Peshawar in January 1841. At this time, Dost Mohammed was a prisoner of state and on his way to exile in Calcutta. Rattray was struck by the Emir's deep voice, open manner and intelligent countenance, and by his followers with their finely chiselled features and tall, handsome figures. The young boy with his head shaven in the manner 'peculiar to the rosy-cheeked children of Caubul' was the Emir's

son from his youngest wife. Rattray wrote that since Dost Mohammed had been 'a ruler just and merciful and attentive to affairs of state [...] the population of Peshawur considered him to be most unjustly treated by us.' The decorations of this apartment were a facsimile of the Emir's former audience hall in the citadel of Ghazni.

13. See Hanifi 2011: 77-94 for attention to the economic impact of the first colonial occupation on the economy of Afghanistan, Hopkins 2008: 25-30 for situating Pashtun tribal identity at the core of colonial frameworks for understanding Afghanistan, and Barfield 2010 for one of the latest installments in a long line of writers who perpetuate the Pashtun domination thesis.

14. See Singh 1981 for a biography of Ahmad Shah Durrani.

15. See Hanifi 2012a, 2012b, and 2012c (forthcoming).

16. See Malcolm 1827 for Persia, Ahulwalia 1982 and Kaye 1854, chapter 8 for Metcalfe's mission to Lahore and Elphinstone 1992 for the British Mission to Kabul.

17. Cotton 1892: 53-54.

18. Faiz Muhammad, 1913, vol. 1: 77-8.

19. The cost at supplying the mission was Rs. 5,244.7 but Elphinstone went into roughly Rs. 25,424.12 in personal debt due to the actions of a corrupt Afghan banker employed by the mission that was not recovered until at least 1821. See British Library, Oriental and African Studies Reading Room, Mountstuart Elphinstone Papers Mss Eur F88/474 'Bills and Accounts 1808-1820' and Mss Eur F88/107 'Caubul Expense Report.'

20. See Connolly 1838, vol. 2: 58 for payment information, Masson, vol. 1: 191-193 for more on Mullah Najib's account of the Siaposh Kafirs.

21. Hopkins 2008: Introduction, and Hanifi 2012b.

22. Delhi Resident Informs Elphinstone of Reception of Cabul Refugees, Press List II, Book 4, Serial n° 101, 12 April 1809, Elphinstone dispatch about Kabul Intelligence, Press List II, Serial 204, 22 May 1809, Seton to Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial n° 42, 17 April 1809, (Archibald) Seton to (Neil Benjamin) Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial n° 44, 18 May 1809, Seton to Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial No. 43, 28 April 1809, Seton to Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial n° 53, 3 August 1809

23. Cotton 1892: 73.

24. See Faiz Muhammad, 1913, vol. 1: 94 for Ranjit Singh's practice of carrying Shuja around in a cage. For Shuja's narration of his time in Lahore in Ranjit Singh's custody see *Waqiat-e Shah Shuja*, The Twenty Sixth Event: 40-51.

25. Seton to Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial n° 42, 17 April 1809.

26. Seton to Edmonstone, Press List II, Book 3, Serial n° 53, 3 August 1809.

27. Shuja's Wife's Desire to Enter British Territory, Press List II, Book 9, Serial n° 2, 19 December 1812.

28. *ibid.*

29. Use of Native Newspapers to Contradict Rumours that the British Espouse Shuja's Cause, Press List II, Book 9, Serial n° 106 and Ochterlony to Metcalfe, Press List IV, Book 61, Serial n° 87, 10 June 1813. See also Wade to Macnaghten about the concentration of Lohani commerce, Press List V, Book 101. Serial n° 17, 21 May 1834.

30. Elphinstone 1992, vol. 1: 68.

31. Shuja's Intention to Seek Asylum in British Territory, Press List II, Book 8, Serial n° 51, 9 July 1813.

32. Chabra 2005: 92.

33. (unknown first name) Adam to (unknown first name) Birch, Press List II, Book 9 Part One, Serial n° 15, 15 march 1815.

34. (unknown first name) Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 157, 7 December 1816.

35. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 142, 10 November 1816.

36. Metcalfe to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 136, 3 November 1816.
37. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 142, 10 November 1816, Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 157, 7 December 1816, Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial No. 158, 10 December 1816, unknown to Birch, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 35, 2 March 1817, Adam to Metcalfe, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 59, 10 May 1817, Adam to Metcalfe, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 65, 17 June 1817, and Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 70, 5 July 1817.
38. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18 Serial n° 136, 4 November 1816.
39. Adams to Ochterlony, Press List II, Book 9, Serial n° 35, no date.
40. Ochterlony to Murray, Press List IV, Book 61, Serial n° 197, 11 November 1816. See Bayly 1996 for more on the information landscape of colonial India.
41. Ochterlony to Murray, Press List IV, Book 61, Serial n° 207, 26 December 1816.
42. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 158, 10 December 1816, and Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 70, 5 July 1817.
43. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 142, 10 November 1816, and unknown to Birch, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 35, 2 March 1817
44. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 157, 7 December 1816.
45. Murray to Ochterlony, Press List III, Book 18, Serial n° 158, 10 December 1816. See Freidmann 1971 for more on Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi.
46. 'Trevelyan's Note on Commerce of Afghanistan,' and 'Trevelyan's Note on Trade of Cabul,' National Archives of India, Foreign P.C., September 5, 1836, Proceeding n° 9-19. For published examples of colonial officials viewing themselves as literally following in Alexander's footsteps, see Burnes 1992, vol. 1: 6-7, 46-8 and Moorcroft 1979 vol. 1: 61-2.
47. To identify the British plan for the Indus river the 'Mithenkote Market Scheme' phrase is used in Hanifi 2011, while the 'Indus Navigation Scheme' is used in Hasrat 1959: 119-132.
48. Hanifi 2011: 51-76.
49. For the text of the Tripartite Treaty that was signed on 26 June 1838 (23rd rabi' al-sani 1254) and the subsequent correspondence about amendments culminating in its ratification by the British on 6 August 1838 (15th jumad al-awwal 1254) see Faiz Muhammad, 1913, vol. 1: 134-141.
50. Faiz Muhammad, 1913, vol. I: 114-115 and 118-125.
51. Adam to Metcalfe, Press List III, Book 19, Serial n° 65, 17 June 1817.
52. (Frederick) Mackeson to (Sir Claude Martin) Wade, Press V, Book 105, Serial n° 27, 4 October 1932.
53. (Sir William Hay) Macnaghten to Wade, Press List V, Book 105, Serial n° 105, 25 September 1833.
54. Shuja to Wade, Press List VI, Book 139, c. early (late winter/early spring) 1833.
55. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 141, Serial n° 68, 31 July 1835.
56. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 139, 9 April 1833, and Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 139, Serial n° 45, 15 July 1833.
57. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 139, Serial n° 50, 31 July 1833, and citation #30A 6 June Merchants Abandon Shikarpur as Shuja approaches.
58. Faiz Muhammad, 1913, vol. 1: 230-123. For another rendition of Shuja's failed attempt to recapture his throne see *Waqiat-e Shah Shuja*, Thirty-Second Event: 69-75.
59. Letter from Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 140, Serial n° 47, 17 June 1834.
60. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 141, Serial n° 68, 31 July 1835.
61. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 141, Serial n° 54, 5 June 1835.
62. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 141, Serial n° 99, 15 December 1835.
63. Wade to Macnaghten, Press List VI, Book 142 Part I, Serial n° 44, 9 July 1836.
64. Untitled, Press List VI, Book 140, undated (between 1 and 17 November 1834).

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ABSTRACTS

The essay uses colonial archival materials from the Archives of the Punjab Province in Lahore to address the thirty-year period between the two reigns of the Durrani Afghan Monarch Shah Shuja (r. 1803-1809 and 1839-1842). Focusing on the 1809-1839 period, the first part of the essay deals with Mountstuart Elphinstone's 1809 diplomatic mission and Shuja's flight from Peshawar. The second part of the article considers the communication between Shah Shuja's primary wife and colonial officials that culminated in Shuja's receipt of housing and a monthly British pension in Ludhiana in 1816. The third part of the essay treats Shuja's aborted attempt to recapture Kabul without British support in 1832-1833 and its consequences for him in Ludhiana. Shuja's lack of Pashto credentials, his dependency on British capital, and his circular migration pattern are viewed as normative rather than exceptional for Afghan rulers, and as such this essay contributes to a revision of the traditional historiography of Afghanistan that views the country through the incompatible lenses of Pashtun ethnic domination of the Afghan state structure and Pashtun tribal resistance to Afghan state formation.¹

INDEX

Keywords: Afghanistan, British Colonialism, First Anglo-Afghan War, historiography, Shah Shuja, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Ludiana

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